

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 116017

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: CENTO

SUBJECT:CENTO COUNCIL OF DEPUTIES MEETING

REF: ANKARA 3400 (NOTAL)

SMITH/MONTVILLE TELCON

1. DEPARTMENT PREPARING ASSESSMENT OF AFGHAN SITUATION
FOR AMBASSADOR'S USE IN MAY 10 COUNCIL OF DEPUTIES MEETING.

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2. THERE FOLLOW BELOW EXCERPS FROM REPORTING AIRGRAM
EN ROUTE TO ADDRESSEES ON RESTRICTED SESSION OF CENTO
MINISTERIAL IN LONDON APRIL 19. IN ADDITION TO SUMMARY OF
PRESENTATION BY PAKISTANI FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER
AGHA SHAHI, WE INCLUDE RELEVANT PORTION OF ASIAN FOREIGN
MINISTER KHALATBARY'S REMARKS. THESE SUMMARIES WERE PRE-
PARED BY MEMBER OF U.S. DELEGATION. SINCE RESTRICTED

SESSION WAS QUOTE OFF THE RECORD UNQUOTE POSTS SHOULD USE
FOR BACKGROUND ONLY.

3. SUMMARY OF PAKISTANI FOREIGN ADVISER'S REMARKS."SHAHI
ASSOCIATED HIMSELF FULLY WITH KHALATBARY'S REMARKS.(PARA 13)
PAKISTAN, HE SAID, REMAINS IN CLOSEST TOUCH WITH IRAN AND
SHARES ITS THINKING ABOUT THE THREAT TO THE REGION.

PAKISTAN IS DEEPLY CONCERNED BY THE LACK OF DEFENSIVE
PREPARATIONS TO FACE THE THREAT. UNFORTUNATELY, THE NON-
REGIONAL PARTIES (I.E., THE U.S. AND THE UK) DO NOT SEEM
TO SHARE THIS FEELING. PAKISTAN'S POLICY OF INDEPENDENCE
FROM THE SOVIET UNION IS OF KEY IMPORTANCE BUT IS NOT
APPRECIATED BY THE WEST.

4. FOREIGN MINISTER KHALATBARY HAD NOTED THAT THE PERSIAN
GULF WAS THREATENED BY FORCES HOSTILE TO THE WEST. SHAHI
WISHED TO REMIND THE MINISTERS THAT THREATS CAN COME FROM
MANY DIRECTIONS. IF PAKISTAN WERE TO SUCCUMB TO THE
TEMPTATION OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN EXCHANGE FOR SECURITY,
IRAN WOULD BE OUTFLANKED. THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE A THREAT
TO THE PERSIAN GULF BY THE SOVIETS. THE VERY KNOWLEDGE
THAT THE SOVIETS WERE IN A POSITION TO INTERRUPT OIL
SUPPLIES WOULD AFFECT WESTERN AND JAPANESE STRATEGY TOWARD
THE SOVIET UNION. BY REMAINING INDEPENDENT, SHAHI
CONTINUED, PAKISTAN SERVES MORE THAN ITS OWN INTERESTS. IT
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HELPS PROTECT, FOR EXAMPLE, WESTERN INTERESTS IN THE
PERSIAN GULF. UNFORTUNATELY, PAKISTAN HAS FAILED TO CON-
VINCE THE WEST THAT ITS POSITION MUST BE STRENGTHENED.

5. SHAHI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT CENTO WAS FORMED AS A MEANS OF
DEFENSE AGAINST ATTACK ON THE REGIONAL COUNTRIES BY THE
SOVIET UNION. THE TROUBLE IS, HE CONTINUED, THAT THE
SOVIETS WILL NOT ATTACK DIRECTLY BUT INDIRECTLY AND SUBTLY.
IN FACT, THE INDIRECT THREAT WAS RATHER DIRECT IN THE SIG-
NATURE OF THE 1971 SOVIET-INDIAN PACT. IN THE SUBSEQUENT
SUPPORT OF THE SOVIET UNION FOR INDIA'S DISMEMBERMENT OF
PAKISTAN, THE U.S. AND THE WEST WERE PHLEGMATIC. PAKISTAN
DID NOT DESERVE TO BE CUT IN TWO BECAUSE OF ADMINISTRATIVE
MISTAKES IN EAST PAKISTAN, YET THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED.
EACH YEAR THE SOVIET-INDIAN PACT IS REAFFIRMED. THIS IS A
FACT THAT MUST BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY BY THE U.S. AND THE WEST.

6. PAKISTAN UNDERSTANDS, SHAHI WENT ON, THAT IN THE POST-
WATERGATE AND POST-VIETNAM ATMOSPHERE IN THE U.S., PUBLIC
OPINION IS DISINCLINED TO SUPPORT DEFENSIVE ARRANGEMENTS
WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. WHAT PAKISTAN WANTS IS THE ABILITY
TO DEFEND ITSELF EVEN IF ONLY FOR A FEW DAYS OR WEEKS

GAINST AN ATTACK UNTIL THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL CAN COME TO ITS RESCUE. WE ARE STILL DEPENDING ON 1950 SABRE JET AIRCRAFT, HE SAID. THERE IS GROWING ALIENATION IN THE INTELLIGENTSIA AND INCREASING CYNICISM ABOUT PAKISTAN'S POLICY OF ASSOCIATION WITH THE WEST. IT IS HARD TO CONVINCE PUBLIC OPINION THAT OUR CURRENT POLICIES MAKE SENSE. SOME PAKISTANIS ASK IF IT WOULD NOT BE WISER TO MAKE THE BEST DEAL ONE CAN DIRECTLY WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

7. IN HIS PUBLIC SPEECH AT THE OPENING OF THIS CONFERENCE, SHAHI CONTINUED, HE SAID THAT INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS HAVE IMPROVED. THIS IS TRUE, BUT UNTIL THE SOVIET-INDIAN PACT BECOMES A TRULY MEANINGLESS DOCUMENT, PAKISTAN WILL BE GREATLY CONCERNED. WE REMEMBER THE
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BLUNT ASSERTION BY KOSYGIN IN 1972 THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD BACK BALUCHISTAN SEPARATISM IF IT DEVELOPED.

8. THE BASIC PROBLEM IN INDO-PAKISTAN RELATIONS IS KASHMIR, SHAHI SAID. NO PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT WOULD EVER BE ABLE TO ACCEPT THE INDIAN POSITION THAT KASHMIR IS INDIAN AND A PLEBISCITE IS UNACCEPTABLE. THERE CAN BE NO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH INDIA UNTIL THE KASHMIR PROBLEM IS SETTLED, AND NO SETTLEMENT IS IN SIGHT. WE MUST, THEREFORE, WORK ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT INDIA IS A MILITARY THREAT.

9. INDIA HAS NOT SCALED DOWN ITS MILITARY BUDGET, SHAHI SAID. IT MAINTAINS A FOUR-TO-ONE RATIO OVER PAKISTAN. IT IS TRYING TO ACQUIRE DEEP PENETRATION STRIKE AIRCRAFT. SHAHI SAID HE HAD TOLD INDIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE THAT WHILE THE LATTER HAD SAID A STRONG PAKISTAN WAS IN INDIA'S INTERESTS, HE OBJECTED TO PAKISTAN'S ADDING TO ITS DEFENSE FORCES. DEEP PENETRATION AIRCRAFT FOR INDIA WOULD BE INADEQUATE FOR DEALING WITH THE CHINA THREAT AND THEY ARE NOT NEEDED FOR DEFENSE AGAINST PAKISTAN IN THE FACE OF INDIA'S OBVIOUS AIR SUPERIORITY.

10. SHAHI SAID GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE INDIAN SITUATION, IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO PAKISTAN THAT RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN HAVE BEEN IMPROVED. WITH A GREAT SOVIET LAND MASS TO THE NORTH AND 650 MILLION INDIANS TO THE SOUTH, WHO ARE HIGHLY INDUSTRIALIZED AND TECHNICALLY ADVANCED, IT IS CLEAR THAT PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN ACT AS BUFFER STATES. HOWEVER, AS MINISTER KHALATBARY SAID, PRESIDENT DAOUD IS NOT A YOUNG MAN AND HE IS THE ONLY AFGHAN WE CAN SEE WHO IS CAPABLE OF SETTling BORDER DISPUTES WITH PAKISTAN AND PURSUING A NORMALIZATION.
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TION OF RELATIONS. THERE IS SERIOUS THREAT OF DETERIORA-
TION OF RELATIONS IF DAOUD LEAVES THE SCENE.

11. PAKISTAN FEELS VERY VULNERABLE SHAHI SAID. WE
CANNOT ESCAPE THE GEOPOLITICAL REALITIES AND WE ASK OUR-
SELVES WHAT IS THE VALUE OF CLOSE RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.
THE SOVIETS ARE SUCCESSFUL IN AFRICA AND SOUTH YEMEN.
THEY KEEP UP THE PRESSURE ON AFGHANISTAN AND THEY ARE
ALLIED WITH INDIA. CENTO DOES LITTLE FOR US. WE WOULD
LIKE TO ASK THAT THE SOVIET INDIRECT THREAT TO THE REGION
BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN REVISING THE CENTO POLITICAL

GUIDANCE. THE WESTERN MEMBERS HAVE NOT BEEN WILLING TO DO
THIS SO FAR. THE "TALKING PAPER" OF FORMER SECRETARY
GENERAL BAYULKEN WHICH AMONG OTHER THINGS RECOMMENDS
THAT THE U.S. CONGRESS AGREE TO DEFEND REGIONAL COUNTRIES
IN LINE WITH UN CHARTER OBLIGATIONS IS WELL MEANT, BUT NOT
REALISTIC. :EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE CONGRESS DOES NOT
VIEW CENTO'S COLLECTIVE SECURITY COMMITMENTS THE WAY IT
VIEWS AMERICA'S NATO COMMITMENTS. PAKISTAN DOES BELIEVE
THAT THE CENTO MILITARY PLANNERS SHOULD CONSIDER EXTEN-
SION OF THE U.S./UK NUCLEAR UMBRELLA TO THE REGIONAL
COUNTRIES THAT FACE A NUCLEAR THREAT FROM FORCES HOSTILE
TO THE MEMBERS.

12. IN SUMMING UP, SHAHI SAID, CENTO'S STRENGTH DEPENDS
ON ITS WEAKEST LINK, WHICH IS PAKISTAN."

13. EXCERPT FROM IRANIAN SUMMARY OF FOREIGN MINISTER'S
REMARKS. "THERE IS CAUSE FOR INCREASING CONCERN
... INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM HAS
SUPPORTED THE DHOFAR REBELLION AND HELPED BRING TO POWER
THE PRO-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT IN ADEN. DURING THE PAST
EIGHT YEARS THE SOVIETS EXERTED SPECIAL INFLUENCE IN
SOMALIA, AND CONCENTRATES NOW IN ETHIOPIA. THE
SOMALIS HAVE TOLD IRAN ABOUT THE SOVIET MASTER PLAN
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WHICH ASPIRES TO THE CAPABILITY TO CLOSE OFF THE RED
SEA AT THE BAB EL MANDEB.

14. KHALATBARY SAID IRAN BELIEVES THE SOVIET UNION IS
TRYING TO CATCH IT IN PINCERS BETWEEN IRAQ AND AFGHANIS-
TAN. RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN UNDER PRESIDENT DAOUD ARE
PRESENTLY GOOD BUT HE IS NEITHER YOUNG NOR WELL. HE

COULD BE SUCCEEDED BY YOUNG, SOVIET-TRAINED MILITARY
OFFICERS. THE MINISTER NOTED THAT IRAN ALSO WORRIES
ABOUT CONTINUING SOVIET INTEREST IN INDIA." CHRISTOPHER

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